

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully traverses and requests reconsideration.

Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the notice that claims 1-66 and 70-73 are allowed. Only claims 67, 68 and 69 stand rejected.

Remaining claims 67-69 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,330,648 (Wambach et al.). As to claim 67, the claim requires, among other things, a southbridge that includes an interface controller that receives interface control commands to control an interface device and a protection engine that, among other things, prevents unauthorized access to the interface device and receives interface control commands, to determine whether a source of the interface command is authentic, and to selectively allow or inhibit execution of the interface control command by the interface controller depending on whether or not the source of the interface control command is authentic. As such, the claim is directed to an interface control command based operation employed in a southbridge and wherein the authenticity of the source of a command is determined. As set forth, for example in pages 8 and 9, in the Specification, in one example the protection engine is capable of authenticating the source of an interface control command by, for example, using a cryptographic technique, such as digital signatures, to authenticate the source of the interface control command. However, any suitable technique may be employed. No such source authenticity or southbridge circuit or protection engine is taught or suggested by the cited reference.

For example, the office action cites to column 3, line 55 to column 5, line 24 of Wambach as allegedly teaching this subject matter. However, the cited portion instead describes an operation where a circuit in an external drive interface card uses a write protection circuit 160 to prevent writing to a hard drive based on lists of “protected” mass memory locations. (See for

example, column 4 and elsewhere). The cited portion does not describe, among other things, determining whether a source of an interface control command is authentic nor does it describe a southbridge including the claimed protection engine and interface controller nor is there any selective inhibit or allowance of execution of an interface control command based on whether or not the source of the interface control command is authentic. Instead, Wambach appears to merely teach using a list of “protected” memory locations of a hard drive to determine whether or not a write operation can be employed for those addresses. Since the reference does not teach what is alleged, Applicant respectfully submits that the claim is in condition for allowance.

Dependent claims 68 and 69 are allowable at least as depending from an allowable base claim and also since they add additional novel and non-obvious subject matter. For example, claim 68 includes a one-time-writable register to store a value used to determine whether the source of the interface control command is authentic. The office action cites column 8, lines 15-56 as allegedly teaching this subject matter. However, the cited portion refers to a user interface that allows a user to specify names of files in the mass memory which are to be protected. As with other embodiments, the mass memory addresses are determined from the user’s designated file names to determine which addresses should not be modified. As such, a software user interface is employed to allow a user to designate the protected files. Applicant is unable to find any description of a one-time-writable register that stores a value used to determine whether the source of an interface control command is authentic. As such, Applicant respectfully submits that the claim is in condition for allowance.

Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are in condition for allowance and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. The Examiner is invited

to contact the below-listed attorney if the Examiner believes that a telephone conference will advance the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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